

wards you, and if it appear to you of use that he should be informed of this, take care that the communication be made so as to give him the least possible annoyance; do not convey your expression in a way to make him suppose you think ill of him; so speak that he may regard you as attributing his conduct to a cause in which he is little or not at all to blame. You have asked him, for example, to visit you: he has neither done this, nor sent an answer: he ought to have come, or at least to have given a reason why he would not, or did not come. Impute his neglect to the possible miscarriage of your letter; or if the message was a verbal one, to probable misconception on the part of the bearer; to misconception, or misexpression, or forgetfulness; for, as the effect might have been produced by any of these causes, there is no insincerity in a man's supposing as much.

LEGENDS OF RICHARD THE GOOD, DUKE OF NORMANDY.

FROM THE "LAYS AND LEGENDS OF VARIOUS NATIONS,"
NO. 2. (JUST PUBLISHED) CONTAINING "LAYS AND LEGENDS OF FRANCE."

It was the custom of Duke Richard of Normandy, called the Good, to ramble about by night as well as by day, and though he met with many phantoms he was never afraid of them. As he was so much abroad in the former season, it was commonly reported that he could see as well in the dark as other men by daylight. Whenever he came to an abbey or a church, he was sure to stop and pray outside, if he could not gain admission within. One night as he was riding along wrapt in meditation, and far from any attendant, he alighted, according to custom, before a church, fastened his horse at the door, and went in to pray. He passed a coffin which lay on a bier, threw his gloves on a reading-desk in the choir, and knelt before the altar, kissed the earth, and commenced his devotions. He had scarcely done so when he heard a strange noise proceeding from the bier behind him. He turned round, (for he feared nothing in the world;) and looking towards the place, said, "Whether thou art a good or a bad thing, be still and rest in peace!" The Duke then proceeded with his prayer, whether it was long or short I cannot tell, and at the conclusion signed himself with the cross saying

Per hoc signum sanctæ crucis
Liberâ me de malignis
Domine Deus Salutis.

Through this sign of the Holy Cross,
Deliver me from the Evil Ones,
Lord God of my Salvation.

He then arose, and said, "Lord into thy hands I commend my spirit." He took his sword, and as he was preparing to leave the church, beheld the devil stood bolt upright at the door, extending his long arms, as if to seize Richard, and prevent his departure. The latter drew his sword, cut the figure down the centre, and sent it through the bier. Whether it cried or not I do not know. When Richard came to his horse outside the door, he perceived that he had forgotten his gloves; and as he did not wish to lose them, he returned into the chancel for them. Few men would have done as much. Wherefore he caused it to be proclaimed, both in the churches and in the market places, that in future no corpse should be left alone till it was buried.

Another adventure happened to the Duke, which made people wonder, and which would not so easily have been believed, were it not so well known. I have heard it from many, who had in like manner heard it from their forefathers; but often through carelessness, idleness or ignorance, many a good tale is not committed to writing though it would prove very entertaining. At that time there was a sacristan,* who was reckoned a proper monk and one of good report; but the more a man is praised, the more the devil assaults him, and watches the more for an occasion to tempt him. So it happened to the Sacristan. One day, so the devil would have it, as he was passing by the church about his business, he saw a marvellously fine woman, and fell desperately in love with her. His passion knows no bounds. He must die if he cannot have her; so he will leave nothing undone to come at his end. He talked to her so much, and made her so many promises, that the fair dame at last appointed a meeting in the evening at her own house. She told him that he must pass over a narrow bridge or rotten plank which lay across the river Robec; that there was no other way, and that she could not be spoken with any where else.—When the night came, and the other monks were asleep, the Sacristan grew impatient to be gone. He wanted no companion, so he went alone to the bridge and ventured on it. Whether he stumbled or slipped, or was taken suddenly ill, I cannot tell, but he fell into the water, and was drowned.

As soon as his soul left the body, the devil seized it, and was posting away with it to hell, when an angel met him, and strove with him which of them should possess it: wherefore a great dispute arose between them, each giving a reason in support of his claim. Says the devil, "Thou dost me wrong, in seeking to deprive me of the soul I am carrying; dost thou not know that every soul taken in sin is mine? This was in a wicked way, and in a wicked way I have seized it. Now the Scripture itself says, 'As I find thee, so I will judge thee.' This monk I found in evil, of which the business

he was about is sufficient proof, and there needs no other." Replies the angel, "Hold thy peace; it shall not be so. The monk led a good life in his abbey, he conducted himself well and faithfully, and no one ever saw ill of him. The Scripture saith, that which is reasonable and right, every good work shall be rewarded, and every evil one punished. Then this monk ought to be rewarded for the good we know he has done; but how could that be if he were suffered to be damned? He had not committed any sin when thou didst take and condemn him. Howbeit, he had left the abbey, and did come to the bridge, he might have turned back if he had not fallen into the river; and he ought not to be so much punished for a sin which he never committed. For his foolish intention alone, thou condemnest him, and in that thou art wrong. Let the soul alone, and as for the strife betwixt thee and me, let us go to Duke Richard, and abide by his opinion. Neither side will have any reason to complain; he will decide honestly and wisely, for false judgment is not to be found in him. To what he says we will both submit without any more dispute." Says the devil, "I consent to it; and let the soul remain between us."

They immediately went to Richard's chamber, who was then in bed. He had been asleep, but just then he was awake and reflecting upon divers things. They related to him how the monk had left his monastery on an evil errand, how he had fallen from the bridge, and been drowned without doing evil. They desired him to judge which of them should take possession of the soul. Answers Richard, briefly, "Go immediately, and restore the soul to the body; let him then be placed on the bridge, on the very spot from which he tumbled; and if he advances one foot, nay, ever so little, let Nick go and take him away without further hindrance; but if the monk turns back, let him do so unmolested. Neither could say nay to this decision, so they did as he had said. The soul was returned to the body, the body restored to life, and the monk placed on the very part of the bridge whence he had fallen. As soon as the poor fellow perceived that he was standing upright on the bridge, he ran back as quickly as though he had trod on a snake; he did not even stay to bid the devil and the angel good bye. On his reaching the abbey, he shook his wet clothes, and crept into a corner. He was still terrified at the thought of death, and he could not well say whether he was dead or alive. The next morning Richard went to the abbey church to pray. The Duke caused him to be brought before the abbot, "Brother," says Richard, "what think you now? How came you to be taken? Take care another time how you pass the bridge. Tell the abbot what you have seen to-night." The monk blushed, and was ashamed in the presence of his superior and the duke. He confessed all, how he went, how he perished, how the devil had deceived him, and how the duke had delivered him; he related the whole matter, which was confirmed by the noble Richard. Thus was the thing noised abroad and its certainty established. Long after it took place, this saying became a proverb in Normandy, "Sir monk, go gently, take care of yourself when you pass over the bridge."

FRUITS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING.

[To the Editor of the London Journal.]

SIR,—Pursuant to your instructions, I yesterday attended a General Meeting of the Fruits and Vegetables of the United Kingdom, convened at the Three Jolly Gardeners, Portman Market; and am happy to report, notwithstanding the illiberal tone of many of the speeches, that a very high degree of culture was observable in the generality; this is a fact, which in spite of their teeth, cannot be denied.

A general gloom pervaded the aspect of the meeting; though this was somewhat relieved by the female beauty present in the galleries, which were crowded by scions of most of the old stock of the kingdom. Some peareesses might be named, nor must "two turn cherries," the rosiest of the race—and a delicate young plum, bursting with sweets, yet in all the immaculate bloom of youth, be forgotten. I was happy to observe, that the lovely duchess PEACH retains all the mellow charm so much admired in her complexion.

Several foreigners of distinction were present, among whom those of the house of ORANGE were most remarkable. With these exceptions the meeting was exclusive à l'outrance; so much so, that the HOR family were stopped at the doors, as they declined entering without their poles, and those gentlemen could not be admitted till the sense of the assembly had been taken. That was soon done. Nothing human was to be seen in this solemn convocation! with the honourable exception in the favour of that useful body—vulgarly styled old apple-women, who had been invited: under the guise of one of these, your reporter made good his entrance.

After a short discussion, Alderman MELON was called to the chair. The portly gentleman excited much merriment in the galleries from the manner in which he rolled to his seat. There was a green and yellow melancholy in his appearance which caused the young ladies to observe that he was a bachelor.

After the chairman had stated the object of the meeting, and implored the attention of the vegetable world to the necessity of union among themselves in these innovating times,

WILD STRAWBERRY arose, and in a rambling speech wished himself to be understood to claim the protection of the laws. Though commonly called Wild, he had sown his wild oats; he now began to look about him, and

found that he was superseded and forgotten in the market. He was a great landholder—he had held from time immemorial—it was said that no restraint was put upon him—that he had some of the most lovely spots in England to luxuriate in—but that was 'nt the question; what was the use of his growing, if he was not to be eaten? he claimed a vested right in the stomachs of Englishmen. Alas! he did not speak for himself—his days were numbered—but it was the system of sacrificing the luxuries of units, to happiness of thousands, that he complained of—it was a system by which he was a loser—it was ridiculous! he had been a sufferer—it was flagitious! England would have cause to mourn over the extinction of her wild Strawberry. Why could 'nt men eat now what their grandmothers had been but too happy to mumble before them. No! they must run after novelties; he would have them beware of innovations, one HAUTOIS for instance. The speaker closed with some severe reflections on Mr. Willmott. (reiterated cheers.)

GREEN PEAS then rose, and in a small voice, complained of being forced into the market at a season when his forefathers used to be still in the flower of their youth. I suppress some observations made by this speaker on being debarred from the pleasures and flirtations of the garden.

ONION then begged to rise. (A voice, "Onion, you're always a-rising.") Onion however proceeded in a manner that brought tears into the eyes of all present.

One CRAB, a little ill-favoured personage, then got on his stalk. He stated himself to come of a branch of an almost extinct family: he was remarkably sharp and pungent in his observations on the neglect with which he was now treated; he whose name occupied so distinguished a place in the annals of old England—(here the gentleman quoted Shakspeare, in support of his position)—he who, whatever his enemies might say, was so celebrated for the sweetness of his disposition and intrinsic worth. ("Oh, oh!" from a knot of jolly young pippins who had insinuated themselves into the meeting.) He would ask why the insipid CODLING, a fellow of "no mark or likelihood," or the rascally RUSSET, that booby in a brown coat, should find more favour than himself. Neither did he care a fig for the mongrel PEARMAIN. He denounced the fate of all the empires that ever fell, upon England for her desertion of Crab. He should move that a protection duty be laid on all other apples: it was no consequence that people made wry mouths at him; it was a symptom of bad taste, which time would eradicate.

FRG arose to express his wonderment at the personal allusion to himself in the speech of his honourable friend. He would appeal to the meeting, as to which of the two, APPLE or himself, had done the best service to the human race, as far as histories went. He called on CRAB to explain.

CRAB must decline explaining; what he had said, he had said. It was well known that he it was who first introduced FRG and his friends into public life.—High words ensued, and both parties were ordered into the custody of the proper officers.

SUMMER CABBAGE and RED CABBAGE rose together, but they spent the time allotted to speaking in a squabble as to priority. There was much ill blood also displayed between worthy "Master MUSTARD-SEED" and his old rival, one CHARLOCK; MUSTARD was evidently very hot-headed.

MEDLAR next caught the eye of the Chairman. As time was pressing, he would trouble them with a few observations on the change of seasons in England. (Cries of "Question!" and "Go on!") He would be damned if he'd go on. They must account for the change of climate themselves! MEDLAR sat down evidently much mortified.

The Chairman then arose, and, previously to moving any of the important questions to be submitted, he must be allowed to express his utter abhorrence of those hot beds of corruption, those nurseries of all that is bad, in which jackanapes, calling themselves Melons, were constantly reared. He was a lover of the breath of heaven, and would own himself a very Persian in his adoration of the sun. He was sure he spoke the sentiments of his worthy friend CUCUMBER, whom he had the honour to face.

A variety of resolutions were then put and carried nem con.; said resolutions to be moulded into a petition and presented to the Commons House by any one of the elderly gentlemen before mentioned, who has a seat.

After the Chairman had retired, Deputy-chair CUCUMBER took his place, and proceeded, in a lengthy harangue, to prove the ability of the worthy Chairman—and his own eloquence. In proof, he said, of the respectability of the meeting, he needed only to remind those present of their honourable President, Alderman MELON, whose propriety of conduct and high connections were unimpeachable. In proceeding, the speaker had occasion to direct all eyes to the galleries, in an appeal to their fair occupants, when—shall I proceed—the object of his commendation was observed seated in very familiar chat with Mademoiselle ORLEANS, the ripe young plum! This proceeding of MELON's was taken in high dudgeon by the meeting—it was derogatory! it was indecorous! ELDER-BERRY was observed to look black, and LOVE-APPLE turned pale. A tremendous uproar ensued; in the course of which, your reporter was discovered, and unmasked, and a shower of NUTS fell on his pericranium, like hail on the glass of a green-house. What followed is unknown; but it is presumed that gentler councils prevailed in your Reporter's behalf, as

* Keeper of the church moveables and sacred vessels.